



# SULFUR DIOXIDE & NITROGEN DIOXIDE FACT SHEET



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## What are they?

**Sulfur Dioxide ( $\text{SO}_2$ )** and **Nitrogen Dioxide ( $\text{NO}_2$ )** are both parts of smog and acid rain.

**Sulfur Dioxide** comes from the burning of coal and oil. It is very smelly. The main sources of  $\text{SO}_2$  are power plants.

**Nitrogen Dioxide** comes from the burning of fossil fuels (like gasoline). The main sources of  $\text{NO}_2$  are cars, trucks, and power plants.

## What are the health effects of $\text{SO}_2$ and $\text{NO}_2$ ?

- $\text{SO}_2$  and  $\text{NO}_2$  both can cause lung disease
- $\text{NO}_2$  can also increase your chances of getting viruses
- $\text{SO}_2$  can cause eye irritation and burning of the skin

## How is acid rain formed?

Acid rain is formed high up in the atmosphere when  $\text{SO}_2$  and  $\text{NO}_2$  combine with water and sunlight. When this reaction forms acid it falls to the ground in the form of acid rain or snow.

## What are the environmental effects of acid rain?

- harmful to plant life
- harmful to aquatic life
- causes damage to forests
- causes damage to vegetation
- corrodes statues and monuments



## How can you protect the environment from acid rain?

- Carpool, walk, or bike whenever possible to decrease emissions from automobile exhaust
- Keep cars well tuned and maintained
- Conserve electricity



Bureau of Air Quality



South Carolina Department of Health  
and Environmental Control